

AMENDMENTS

In the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device comprising:

a substrate;

a plurality of electrodes provided for an operating region formed in the substrate;

a plurality of electrode pads formed on the substrate and each connected to a corresponding electrode of the operating region;

a plurality of wiring connections between one of the electrodes and a corresponding electrode pad; and

a protecting element formed along each of the wiring connections and comprising a first high concentration impurity region formed in the substrate, a second high concentration impurity region formed in the substrate and an insulating region between the first and second high concentration impurity regions, the insulating region being part of the substrate and the protecting element being connected between two electrodes of the plurality of electrodes.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 1-~~or~~2, wherein the protecting element is configured to improve an electrostatic breakdown voltage of the semiconductor device by at least 20 volts over a corresponding semiconductor device without the protecting element.

4. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 1-~~or~~2, wherein each of the protecting elements is disposed adjacent one of the electrode pads.

5. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 1-~~or~~2, wherein one of the first and second high concentration impurity regions is connected to part of one of the electrode pads or part of a metal wiring connection connected to one of the electrodes.

6 (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 1-~~or~~2, wherein one of the first and second high concentration impurity regions is connected to one of the wiring connections.

7. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 1-~~or~~2, further comprising a third high concentration impurity region disposed at a periphery of one of the electrode pads, wherein one of the first and second high concentration impurity regions comprises part of the third high concentration impurity region.

8. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 1-~~or~~2, wherein one of the wiring connections comprises a resistor.

9. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 1-~~or~~2, wherein one of the first and second high concentration impurity regions comprises part of one of the wiring connections.

10-40. (Cancelled)